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MEDIA NOTE

Rewards for Justice – al-Shabaab Leaders Reward Offers

For the first time, the Department's Rewards for Justice program is offering rewards for information on seven key leaders of the Somalia-based al-Shabaab terrorist organization, also known as Harakat Shabaab al-Mujahidin.

The U.S. Department of State has authorized a reward of up to \$7 million for information leading to the location of al-Shabaab founder Ahmed Abdi aw-Mohamed; up to \$5 million each for information leading to the location of his associates Ibrahim Haji Jama, Fuad Mohamed Khalaf, Bashir Mohamed Mahamoud, and Mukhtar Robow; and up to \$3 million each for information leading to the location of additional al-Shabaab leaders Zakariya Ismail Ahmed Hersi and Abdullahi Yare.

Since 2006, al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for several bombings—including suicide attacks—in central and northern Somalia and in the capital of Mogadishu. The group is responsible for the killing of thousands of Somali civilians, Somali peace activists, international aid workers, journalists, and African Union peacekeepers. The group also has threatened terrorist attacks against U.S., Kenyan, and Burundian interests in the region and has launched attacks against neighboring Uganda. Al-Shabaab was responsible for the July 11, 2010 suicide bombings in Kampala, Uganda, which killed more than 70 people, including one American citizen; and the September 2009 suicide bombing of the African Union peacekeeping mission in Mogadishu that killed more than 20 people and damaged the offices of a U.S. firm that was providing support to the peacekeepers.

In February 2012, al-Shabaab's emir in Somalia, Ahmed Abdi aw-Mohamed, and al-Qaida's leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, released a joint video to formally announce a merger of the two organizations.

The al-Shabaab organization's terrorist activities pose a threat to the stability of East Africa and to the national security interests of the United States. The U.S. Secretary of State named al-Shabaab a Foreign Terrorist Organization under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act on February 26, 2008, and a Specially Designated Global Terrorist entity pursuant to Section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224 on February 29, 2008.

The seven individuals named above are key leaders of the al-Shabaab terrorist organization. Aw-Mohamed, born July 10, 1977, in Hargeysa, is the operational commander of al-Shabaab in Somalia. Jama is a key leader from Somaliland who helped form the Harakat Shabaab al-Mujahidin movement and reportedly trained and fought in Afghanistan. Khalaf, a dual Somali

and Swedish national, has raised funds for the organization and helped direct attacks in Somalia. Mahamoud, believed to have been born between 1979 and 1982, is an al-Shabaab military commander and coordinator for al-Qaida operations in Somalia. Robow, born in 1969, has served as an al-Shabaab spokesperson and also has also served as the group's spiritual leader. Hersi acts as al-Shabaab's head of intelligence. Yare is the head of al-Shabaab's media operations, and is also deputy to Aw-Mohamed.

More information about these individuals is located on the Rewards for Justice web site at www.rewardsforjustice.net. We encourage anyone with information on these individuals to contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate, any U.S. military commander, or the Rewards for Justice office via the website (www.rewardsforjustice.net), e-mail (RFJ@state.gov) or mail (Rewards for Justice, Washington, DC 20520-0303, USA). All information will be kept strictly confidential.

The Rewards for Justice program is administered by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Diplomatic Security. Since its inception in 1984, the program has paid more than \$100 million to more than 70 persons who provided actionable information that put terrorists behind bars or prevented acts of international terrorism worldwide.

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